



June 6, 2007

First Call For Help 211 hereby submits its Comments to Public Notice DA 07-2017, released May 7, 2007. The Public Notice requested comments on the status of implementation of the 211 and 511 Dialing Codes. Further, the Public Notice requested comments on actions the Commission should take if these Dialing Codes are not widely used. First Call For Help 211 is limiting its comments to the status of 2-1-1 service in Indiana.

First Call For Help 211 has provided information and referral services in Indiana since 1984 and 2-1-1 service in Indiana since 2004. We provide 2-1-1 service to Bartholomew, Brown, Decatur, Jackson, and Scott Counties reaching a population of 180,571. The database of service providers used for making referrals has listings for 835 Agencies and 1421 Programs. In 2006 our 2-1-1 center received 9,687. Our Center operates by nationally recognized standards and was awarded Accreditation by Alliance of Information & Referral Systems.

The most common reasons people give for calling First Call For Help 211 are Holiday program assistance, Utility bill Assistance, Clothing Assistance, Rent Assistance, and School Supply Assistance. The elderly, families, individuals, and other social service providers who need to find assistance programs turn to First Call For Help 211 to provide essential information about available services. Seasonal and emergency information is especially helpful due to the limited availability and need for special services such as winter coats, tax preparation assistance, and special food distributions. Partnering organizations in the community share First Call For Help 211 contact information for easy community education campaigns announcing the availability of special programs, so that people in need know how to access information and the organizations themselves can enhance service delivery.

First Call For Help 211 has firsthand experience with a number of technical issues specific to 2-1-1 implementation, as described in the Comments submitted by Indiana 211 Partnership, Inc.

As an IN211 Center, we study our awareness about and utilization of 2-1-1. While the awareness about 2-1-1 has grown since our launch, we know that more education efforts are needed.

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We respectfully request that the Commission find the public is well served by the use of 2-1-1, that the Commission continue to support the 2-1-1 Dialing Code for this purpose, and that the Commission use its authority to facilitate more widespread use of the service.

Specifically, we believe that the Commission can help to resolve some of the telecommunications issues and can help increase public awareness of 2-1-1.

Sincerely,

Anne Dolan

Director, First Call For Help 211